

WHAT IS CLAIMED IS:

1. A memory storage structure, comprising:
at least one memory storage device;
a first meta-structure having a first size and
5 operating at a first speed, which is faster than a second
speed for storing meta-information based on information
stored in a memory;
a second meta-structure hierarchically associated with
the first meta-structures, the second meta-structure having
10 a second size larger than the first size and operating at
the second speed such that faster and more accurate
prefetching is provided by coaction of the first and second
meta-structures.

15 2. The structure as recited in claim 1, wherein the
first and second meta-structures include branch history
tables and the meta-information includes branch history
data.

20 3. The structure as recited in claim 2, further

comprising a predicted branch table for identifying a sequence of predicted taken branches that a processor will soon encounter.

5 4. The structure as recited in claim 1, wherein the meta-information includes temporally sequential information that is likely to be used in the near future.

10 5. The structure as recited in claim 1, wherein the meta-information includes spatially sequential information that is likely to be used in the near future.

15 6. The structure as recited in claim 1, wherein the meta-information is correlated to program flow in a processor.

 7. The structure as recited in claim 1, wherein the at least one memory storage device includes a cache.

20 8. The structure as recited in claim 7, wherein at

least one of the meta-structures are incorporated in the cache.

5 9. The structure as recited in claim 7, wherein the cache is hierarchically arranged.

 10. The structure as recited in claim 9, wherein the hierarchically arranged cache includes a first level cache line and a second level cache line.

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 11. The structure as recited in claim 1, further comprising a meta-collector, which collects temporally sequential unique meta-information entries corresponding to a cache line.

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 12. The structure as recited in claim 11, wherein the unique meta-information includes at least one of a branch address (BA) and a predicted target address (TA) for information to be prefetched.

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13. A memory storage structure, comprising:

a cache;

a meta-structure hierarchically arranged in accordance
with a size and speed such that faster and more accurate
5 prefetching is provided by coaction of hierarchical meta-
structures; and

a meta-collector which collects temporally and
spatially sequentially unique meta-information entries
corresponding to a cache line to enable the hierarchical
10 meta-structure operation.

14. The structure as recited in claim 13, wherein the
meta-structures include branch history tables and the meta-
information includes branch history data.

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15. The structure as recited in claim 14, further
comprising a predicted branch table for identifying a
sequence of predicted taken branches that a processor will
soon encounter.

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16. The structure as recited in claim 13, wherein the meta-information is correlated to program flow in a processor.

5 17. The structure as recited in claim 13, wherein at least one meta-structure is incorporated in the cache.

18. The structure as recited in claim 13, wherein the cache is hierarchically arranged.

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19. The structure as recited in claim 18, wherein the hierarchically arranged cache includes a first level cache line and a second level cache line.

15 20. The structure as recited in claim 19, wherein the meta-information includes at least one of a branch address (BA) and a predicted target address (TA) for information to be prefetched.

20 21. The structure as recited in claim 13, further

comprising a plurality of memory storage structures arranged to prefetch information for stages of a circuit.

22. A method prefetching meta-information, comprising
5 the steps of:

providing a memory storage structure having a cache,
meta-structures hierarchically arranged in accordance with
size and speed, and a meta-collector which collects one of
temporally and spatially sequentially unique meta-
10 information entries corresponding to a cache line; and

prefetching meta-information for storage in the meta-
structures such that improved speed is provided by coaction
of hierarchical meta-structures.

15 23. The method as recited in claim 22, wherein the
step of prefetching includes associating cache lines with
information addresses in the meta-collector.

24. The method as recited in claim 22, wherein the
20 meta-structures include branch history tables and the meta-

information includes branch history data.

25. The method as recited in claim 22, further
comprising the step of identifying a sequence of predicted
5 taken branches that a processor will soon encounter by
employing a predicted branch table.

26. The method as recited in claim 22, further
comprising the step of correlating the meta-information to
10 program flow in a processor.

27. The method as recited in claim 22, further
comprising the step of evicting cache line information from
the meta-collector when a corresponding cache line is
15 replaced.

28. The method as recited in claim 22, further
comprising the step of storing evicted information to a next
level memory area in a cache hierarchy.

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29. The method as recited in claim 22, further comprising the step of on a cache miss, writing to a next level memory area in a cache hierarchy a cache miss address.

5 30. The method as recited in claim 22, further comprising the step of updating meta-information between levels of the hierarchical meta-structures.

10 31. The method as recited in claim 30, wherein the step of updating includes updating meta-information by copying the meta-information between a level of a cache and a level of a branch history table.

15 32. The method as recited in claim 30, wherein the step of updating includes updating meta-information by copying the meta-information between a first level of a cache and a second level of a cache.

20 33. The method as recited in claim 30, wherein the step of updating includes updating meta-information by

copying the meta-information between a first level of a meta-structure and a second level of a meta-structure.

34. The method as recited in claim 30, wherein the
5 step of updating includes updating meta-information by copying the meta-information to/from a meta-collector.

35. The method as recited in claim 22, further
comprising the step of accumulating meta-information by
10 transferring the meta-information between entities such that new meta-information is added upon each transfer.

36. A method for processing a temporal sequence of events, wherein the events have spatial context, the method
15 comprising the steps of:

capturing a set of addresses in temporal order, the addresses including information associated with each address;

storing sub-sequences of temporal addresses which share
20 spatial context as monolithic entities wherein each

monolithic entity is associated with a particular spatial context; and

when a new spatial context is encountered in the temporal sequence, creating a new monolithic entity
5 associated with the new spatial context, the new spatial context including the temporal sub-sequence of events associated with the new spatial context.

37. The methods as recited in claim 36, further
10 comprising the step of storing the monolithic entities associated with the spatial contexts in their temporal order of occurrence.

38. The method as recited in claim 36, wherein the
15 monolithic entities include multi-dimensional data.

39. The method as recited in claim 38 wherein one of the multi-dimensions includes a spatial dimension.

20 40. The method as recited in claim 38 wherein one of

the multi-dimensions includes a temporal dimension.

41. The method as recited in claim 38 wherein one of the multi-dimensions includes metadata.

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42. The method as recited in claim 36 wherein the information includes metadata.

43. The method as recited in claim 36, further comprising: storing the monolithic entities at a location determined by spatial context of the monolithic entities.

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44. The method as recited in claim 36, further comprising: storing the monolithic entities at a location determined by temporal context of the monolithic entities.

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45. The method as recited in claim 36, further comprising: retrieving monolithic entities from storage in accordance with spatial content of the said monolithic entities.

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46. The method as recited in claim 45, further
comprising: using metadata associated with the monolithic
entities by a processor after the monolithic entities are
5 retrieved.

47. The method as recited in claim 36, further
comprising: retrieving monolithic entities from storage in
accordance with temporal content of the said monolithic
10 entities.

48. The method as recited in claim 47, further
comprising: using metadata associated with the monolithic
entities by a processor after the monolithic entities are
15 retrieved.